

HISTORY OF THE ABIPONES.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

OF THE CUSTOMARY REMOVAL OF THE BONES.

A FEW things remain to be said of the ceremonies with which the bones of the dead are honoured by the Abipones when they are removed to their native land, and thence to the family burying-places. Many translations of this kind have I witnessed: I will briefly relate that of the Cacique Ychamenraikin, who was killed in battle by the savages at a place full forty leagues distant from the town of St. Jeronymo. A drummer came announcing that the bones of the deceased leader would be carried into the town next day about evening. After the flesh had been stripped off and buried by his companions, they were put into a hide and conveyed on a horse. To receive these bones with due honour, preparations were made by Hanetfain, the chief of the jugglers, and his companion Lamamin, and a house to place the sad remains in appointed and properly furnished. The whole company of the women hastened to meet the funeral at three leagues distance. At the entrance of the town the order of the funeral procession was this: the mournful train was led by

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727 home, it is beyond a doubt that more would be killed after the battle than in the battle.

- 203 727 521 If a battle be fought at a distance from the town, a horseman is sent forward to announce the success of it to the hordesmen. As soon as this messenger is espied from a distance, a crowd come out to meet him, striking their lips with their right hands, and accompany him to his house. Having preserved the profoundest silence he leaps down from his horse on to a bed; whence, as from a rostrum, he announces the event of the battle, with a grave voice, to the surrounding multitude. If a few of the enemy are killed and wounded, he begins his story with *Nalamichiriñi*; they are all slaughtered, which he utters with a severe countenance and declamatory tone, and receives the applauses of the by-standers. He then enumerates those that he himself has slain in battle, and to enhance the merit of the victory, affirms of many, *Eknam Capitan*; he was a captain. At every name that is mentioned of an enemy slain in battle the air resounds with *Kem ékemai? Ta Ycegám!* an exclamation of surprise. The number of captives, waggons, and horses, that have been taken, are then detailed with infinite exaggeration, for of each he asserts that they are innumerable; *Chik Leyé-*

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tsilpi; at which the auditors burst forth into 203
 an exclamation of *Ndêre*, by which they express 727
 a strange and unheard-of thing. Having mi- 624
 nutely recounted every circumstance tending
 to set forth this arduous fight and splendid vic-
 tory, he proceeds to discover those of his
 fellow-soldiers that have been wounded in the
 battle. At every name the by-standers groan,
 and utter the word *Tayretà*! Poor little thing!
 As the Abipones think it a crime to utter the 651
 name of a dead person, the narrator makes use 768
 of a paraphrase, thus, *Yoalè cknam oanerma Ha-*
melèn laneuck là chit kackà: The man, the hus-
 band of the woman Hamelèn, is now no more.
 The mention of the death of one of their 761
 countrymen entirely destroys all the pleasure
 which the news of the victory had excited; so
 that the announcer immediately finds himself
 deserted by his late attentive listeners, as soon
 as ever he begins to touch upon this melancholy
 subject. All the women unloose their hair, 765
 snatch up gourds and drums, and lament in the
 manner that I have described in the twenty-
 fourth chapter.

The Abipones, when returned from an expe- 727
 dition, enter their horde, not in one company, 766
 but separately, without ostentation, if victo-
 rious, and without signification of sorrow, if
 conquered, or even if desperately wounded, un-

CHAPTER XLIV.

OF THE ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL OF VICTORIES, AND
THE RITES OF A PUBLIC DRINKING-PARTY.

527 THE Abipones, not satisfied with celebrating
 727 their victory, as soon as they return, and whilst
 their hands are yet bloody, renew the memory
 of it by public festivities every year. The
 whole of these festivities consists in singing,
 dancing, and extravagancies. When they have
 all collected plenty of honey in the woods, a
 day is appointed for this anniversary ceremony,
 and a large house equal to the number of guests
 203 fixed upon. The last three days before that
 527 appointed for the drinking-party, one of the
 727 public criers, covered with an elegant cloak,
 [576] goes up and down all the tents; at the entrance
 of each he is saluted by the women with a fes-
 tive percussion of the lips; his spear, to which
 a little brass bell is affixed, the mother of the
 family receives, by way of honour, from the
 hands of the comer, and restores to him again
 on his departure. The crier, on entering the
 house, sits down upon a cushion prepared for
 him, of saddles, or some wild animal's skin.
 He then, in a set speech, invites the father of

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the family to the public celebration of victories. 203 ●
 On his departure, he is dismissed by the women. 527
 with the usual percussion of the lips. In the 727
 same manner he enters the dwellings of the.
 other hordesmen, always accompanied by a [554]
 crowd of boys. The office of crier, which the [756]
 noble Abipones despise, is generally performed. 624
 by some juggler of advanced age and low birth.
 Meantime they furnish the house, appointed for 527
 the meeting, with a hasty apparatus. The 727.
 floor is covered with the skins of tigers and of
 kine, upon which the guests sit. A temporary [417]
 erection is made of reeds, upon which they
 place the hairy scalps of their slain enemies, as
 trophies. When they prefer celebrating the
 victory without the tent in the open air, they
 hang these trophies upon spears fixed upright
 in the circle in which they sit. At sun-set, the [715]
 persons invited all flock to the appointed place,
 where they sit down on the ground, having
 leathern vessels of mead set in the midst of
 them, though the drinking does not commence
 till about morning, the whole night being spent
 in chaunting their victories.

They never sing all at once, but only two at 527
 a time, always greatly varying their voices from 533
 high to low, one either taking up, or following, 727
 or interrupting the other, and sometimes
 accompanying him. Now one, now the other.